LOK SABHA

Monday, May 12, 1997/Vaisakha 22, 1919 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Six Minutes Past Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

OBITUARY REFERENCE TO VICTIMS OF EARTHQUAKE IN NORTHEASTERN IRAN

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : As the hon. Members are aware, many people met with an untimely death on account of a devastating earthquake that struck Northeastern Iranian town of Qaen on 10 May, 1997.

The House expresses its shock and grief at the tragedy which has befallen the Iranian people. On behalf of myself and on behalf of the whole House, I extend heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and wish a speedy recovery to the injured.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while in the memory of deceased.

11.07 hrs.

The Member then stood in silence for a short while

11.08 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Committees for Protection of Urdu

*501. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the main recommendations of the Gujaral and Sardar Jafri Committees set up by the Government for the protection of Urdu;

(b) the details of recommendations implemented so far and the time by which all the recommendations will be implemented; and

(c) the steps being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Gujaral Committee report was tabled in the House on February 21, 1979. This covered a wide range of recommendations for promotion of Urdu through steps in different areas involving Education, Administration, Legislation, etc. The status of implementation of this report was reviewed by Jafri Committee which broadly accepted these recommendations.

Some of the major recommendations in respect of education are setting up of Urdu medium primary schools in areas where Urdu speaking population constitutes 10% or more, opening Urdu medium sections in existing secondary schools wherever necessary, and modifications in Three Language Formula in order to facilitate teaching of Urdu.

(b) and (c) Several recommendations of the Jafri Committee and the Gujaral Committee have already been implemented. These includes :

1. Bureau for Promotion of Urdu has been converted into National Council for Promotion of Urdu Languages, (NCPUI), an autonomous body.
2. Facilities provided for promoting research and training of Urdu teachers through Central Institute of Indian Language, Mysore.
3. NCERT has brought out Urdu text books.
4. Calligraphy training centres are being assisted by NCPUL. To promote Urdu reference and research work, NCPUL has brought out the first volume of a 10 volume Urdu encyclopedia.
5. Urdu manuscripts and books are being published by NCPUL. Two volumes of Urdu-English Dictionary published.
6. Award for creative writing in Urdu given by Sahitya Academy every year.
7. Urdu version of Constitution of India brought out.
8. Electoral rolls prepared in Urdu in certain constituencies.
9. Several programmes in Urdu being broadcast in the national channel of All India Radio.

10. Daily Urdu news Bulletin being telecast on Doordarshan.

11. Urdu Unit established at the Headquarters/ Regional office of the Press Information Bureau.

In addition, in order to promote the educational development of the educationally backward minorities, the Ministry have undertaken the following measures :-

1. Under the Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities, a total of 436 schools in upper primary/secondary schools have been set up; 22 primary schools have been upgraded to upper primary and two high schools to higher secondary schools; teaching-learning material provided in 527 primary/upper primary schools.

2. 810 Madarasas have been assisted under the scheme for modernisation of Madarsa Education.

3. The scheme of coaching students belonging to educationally backward minorities being implemented in 22 Universities and 62 Colleges. 48,856 candidates have availed the facility so far.

4. Forty minority concentration districts covered by the scheme of community polytechnic.

5. Bill for setting up Maulana Azad National Urdu University enacted by Parliament.

6. A Centrally sponsored scheme for appointment of urdu teachers and giving incentive of Girl students is awaiting comments of State Governments before finalisation.

7. National minority committee chaired by HRM constituted to monitor programmes of education for minorities.

Implementation of several recommendations lies in the domain of the State Governments. The recommendation on Three Language Formula necessitates a national consensus. The Government have been in correspondence with State Governments. The Government intend to take whatever steps are required at the earliest in consultation with State Governments.

[Translation]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as Independent India steps into the Golden Jubilee year, the Gujral Committee Report on Urdu will also soon be celebrating silver jubilee. This Report was presented in 1975, and tabled in the House in 1979. Thereafter another committee under the chairman-ship of Sardar Jafari was constituted which presented its Report in 1990. More than 200 recommendations have been made in the Gujral Committee Report regarding Urdu whereas only a few recommendations have been mentioned in the todays reply. The recommendations that find mention include the conversion of Bureau for Promotion of Urdu into a National Council etc. I would like to know about the fate of the rest of the recommendations. How many recommendations of the Gujral Committee are still pending. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to unstarred question No. 660 in 1993 it was said that the Sardar Jafari Committee had since submitted its report. As the recommendation made in respect of promotion of Urdu are pertaining to various Ministries and Departments of Central Government, thus a co-ordinated view will be taken and only then action can be taken. This was stated in 1993 and four years have since passed, but now a very disapponting reply has been given. Nothing has been done in respect of rest of the recommendations lying pending out of more than 200 recommendations made by Gujral Committee.

I would like to know whether any consultation was held with the Ministries and Departments of the Central Government after the presentation of Jafri Committee Report ? If so, what were the result thereof ? Now Shri Gujral has become. Prime Minister also, hence at least now the process of implementation of the recommendations should be speeded up. I would like to know about the action being taken in this regard

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Sir, a number of recommendations have been made by Gujral Committee. They pertain to Central Government Departments as well as State Governments. So far as the Central Government Departments are concerned, as already stated in the reply in detail, I would like to state that a number of those recommendations have been implemented. In the answer itself it has been stated that a National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language has been set up, which is an autonomous body. The facilities have been provided for promoting research and training of Urdu teachers through the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore.

MR. SPEAKER : I think you have already mentioned that in your written statement. What about the remaining ones ?

[Translation]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : You have mentioned only 11 recommendation out of total of 200.

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : As far as the Central

Government is concerned, major recommendations have been implemented. Some of the recommendations like the one regarding opening of schools where there is more than 10 per cent of Urdu speaking population, the matter pertains to the State Governments and primary education is entirely the responsibility of the State Governments. Of course, we provide assistance to them. The Central Government had already notified that the Government of India will finalise the policy regarding appointment of Urdu teachers and also girls learning Urdu will be given a stipend of Rs. 20 per month.

Sir, immediately after this Government assumed office, I wrote a letter to the Chief Ministers on 3.2.97 and again I have written a letter reminding them on 24.4.97. I am hoping to get the information from the States and I am following it up.

So far as the other departments of Central Government are concerned, in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, All India Radio and Doordarshan have programmes in Urdu, Urdu News etc. Doordarshan has Bazmi programmes and other documentaries are also being made.

So far as the Railways are concerned, in some Railways, the name of the station is written in Urban. The Northern Railway has published the Time Table in Urdu. *Employment News* is published in Urdu and also some AIR Bulletins are being issued in Urdu. A Urdu Cell has been constituted in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

As far as translation is concerned, the Constitution of India has been translated into Urdu and we are taking steps to translate other Acts also into Urdu.

Then, the NCERT is publishing text books in Urdu. I have already stated that the recommendation regarding appointment of Urdu teachers has been implemented. The Mysore Training Centre, the Lucknow Training Centre and Solan Training Centre are there and more than 3000 students have been trained.

So far as the Central Department are concerned, we are coordinating and I would assure the hon. Member that I will take up the matter again before the Cabinet to take a complete review regarding the implementation of the report.

[Translation]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : At least an assurance has been given for which I thank you. Only a few out of the 200 recommendations have been mentioned. Whereas there is the Post and Telegraph and many other Departments and Ministries of the Government about which the recommendations have been made. Two types of recommendations have been made. Some are pertaining to the Central Government and some other to the State Governments. At least you may give an assurance regarding the recommendations pertaining to the Central Government that an Urdu Cell will be set up at the Union level. I am not asking for a separate Department. It may keep a close watch on the matters regarding Urdu and the implementation of recommendations regarding Urdu and attend to all such matters. Several such matters came to light. Only recently, 60 Urdu teachers on the rolls of Waqf Board were dismissed. It appears from the announcement made by the Education Minister in U.P. that Urdu is being removed from the three language formulae and Sanskrit is being given the status of compulsory language. Urdu teachers working in Bihar have not got their salaries for quite some time now. I do not wish to make a lengthy speech. if a close watch is to be kept on such matters, whether the Minister would set up an Urdu Cell in his Ministry which could consider such matter and ensure the implementation of the recommendations made in Gujral Committee and Jafari Committee Reports ? So far as the states are concerned, how long will you keep on corresponding with them ? A meeting of the Prime Minister, concerned Ministers and Chief Minister should be held to find a way out. Whether any attention will be paid in this regard ?

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Sir, so far as the Ministry of Human Resource Development is concerned, 36 recommendations concern the Department. There is already a cell in the Ministry which is monitoring the education of minorities.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : I was taking of a comprehensive cell which is not merely relating to education but which could look into all the recommendations.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : But my Department is concerned with education.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : But the report of the Gujral Committee is in your Department. I am only saying that now you should have a cell for implementation.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : But implementation pertains to a number of other departments also.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : So, will you not do anything ?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Now, we are considering to implement it quickly. When this Government took over, I had written to all the States. I had a meeting of the Minority Cell and we had detailed discussions. I do not know

whether the hon. Member was also present on that day. I had a meeting with Shri Rai Bahadur who is the Vice Chairman and was also a member of the Gujral Committee. He is a learned man. We had detailed discussions and we have been taking steps. We have worked out a plan of action. As far as the implementation of the entire report is concerned, I have assured the hon. Member that I will take up the matter before the Cabinet as early as possible.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the protection of Indian languages is certainly a very important matter. In order to develop all the Indian languages and in order to protect them, the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore is offering certain facilities to promote the teaching of Indian languages. I would like to know what are these facilities and what achievements have been made ? Has the National council of Education Research and Training taken any special measures for the teaching and Conducting training in Sanskrit and for developing Sanskrit as a contact language of such measures have been taken what are the details thereof ?

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Training is being given to both Urdu as well as Sanskrit teachers. This question pertains to Urdu. If the hon. Member asks a separate question by giving due notice, then I will answer it.

[Translation]

SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA : Hon'ble Minister has mentioned under Item 5 given in page 2 of the reply that legislation for setting up Maulana Azad National Urdu University has been enacted. The bills for setting up the above mentioned. Urdu University and Mahatama Gandhi Hindi University have already been passed. By when the Union Government propose to set up both these Universities and what are the reasons for not any steps in this regard so far ? Similarly it has been mentioned under Item 6 that the Government is waiting for the comments of State Government before finalising a Centrally sponsored scheme for appointment of Urdu teachers and giving incentives to girls school when did the Government write to the State Government and why have they not responded as yet and by when will you be able to complete this process ?

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : Sir, so far as Urdu and Hindi Universities are concerned, we have provided Rs. 4 crore to each University. I am making an effort to start these Universities in the current year. So far as writing to the State Governments is concerned, I have already said that I have written two letters one in the month of February and another in the month of April. I am awaiting the reply. As soon as I get the information, I will act upon it.

[Translation]

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : The Minister of Human Resource Development in his reply has made two important points regarding Urdu. One is that implementation of recommendations is being taken up where there is 10 percent Urdu speaking population. I fail to understand this criteria of 10 percent. There are two such districts in my own constituency where the Urdu speaking population is around 18-20 percent and no recommendation regarding promotion of Urdu is being implemented there. As for the Railways, I do not know from where do you get such calligraphers who do not have any knowledge of Urdu. All the boards written in Urdu are illegible. My mother tongue is Urdu and I have written a number of books and even I can not identify the language in which it is printed. I do not know whether it is Arabic, persian or Latin script. Is such a thing done an purpose ? As a result thereof, money is wasted and Urdu speaking people can not even read them. I have noticed that in the U.P. Secretariat, nameplates of Ministers are prepared by such people and in such a manner that those having knowledge of Urdu can not read it. My point is that when the three language formula was implemented it was that made amply clear that the languages spoken by the common man and not the classic languages would be a part of the three languages adopted by the state. It seems that Urdu is being wiped out by including it in the classical languages, as Shri Banatwalla has also pointed out just now.

MR. SPEAKER : Please come to the point.

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : Are the classical languages or the languages spoken by the common man are included under the three language formula. So far as the language, Sanskrit is concerned, I have not come across any such person all my life who speaks Sanskrit at home . . . *(Interruptions)* At least I have not come across any such person . . . *(Interruptions)* No, I was saying regarding Urdu . . . *(Interruptions)*.

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA : There is a colony in my city where all the people speak Sanskrit. . . *(Interruptions)*.

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : There is a village in Karnataka where only Sanskrit is spoken . . . *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : I was asking whether classical language is included in three language formula ? . . . *(Interruptions)*.

MR. SPEAKER : You have asked your question, now please listen to the reply.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI : The three language formula has been accepted by the country, by all the Chief Ministers and the Union Government, after a great deal of consideration. It is in force since 1966. This is a very sensitive issue. So far as the three language formula is concerned, in the Hindi speaking States, Hindi English and a modern Indian language, preferably one of the Southern languages, should be taught, In the non-Hindi speaking areas, Hindi, English and regional language are to be taught. This is the formula. Whatever modifications are to be made, we cannot do it without the consultation and the concurrence of the State Government in a federal country like ours. Therefore, a consensus is to be evolved. Up till now, we have not been able to have a consensus on this issue. Therefore, implementation of the Gujral Committee recommendations raises another question. There are many linguistic minorities. There are linguistic minorities in the North-East. In Karanata, there is a Telugu minority. There is also a Konkani minority. This is very complicated and a very sensitive matter and the Government will have to take a very cautions decision in consultation with the State Government.

[Translation]

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : Now that you have clarified your stance on what you had decided regarding the inclusion of modern languages under the three language formula, would be implement the same strictly ?

Blindness

*502. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether out of 42 million blind people in the world, 12 million are in India alone;

(b) whether it is a fact that in Bihar and Eastern States there are largest percentage of blind people;

(c) if so, whether Union Government have been providing assistance to NGOs for undertaking various schemes for treatment of blindness;

(d) if so, the total amount so far provided to NGOs for removal of blindness in the country;

(e) the details of schemes which have been implemented by them; and

(f) other measures being taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. More than 12 million persons are estimated to be blind in India with a visual acuity less than 6/60 in the better eye.

(b) No. Sir

(c) Currently five schemes are being implemented under National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) with the participation of voluntary organisations.

(d) and (e) Grant in-Aid is given to non-profit NGOs under the following five schemes:-

(1) Scheme for free Cataract Surgery through camps.

(2) Scheme for free Cataract Surgery in fixed facilities.

(3) Scheme for generating public awareness about Eye Health Care and outreach activities.

(4) Scheme for setting up/strengthening of eye bank in voluntary sector.

(5) Scheme for setting up or expansion of Eye Care Units in rural and tribal areas.

An amount of Rs. 9,90,61,758 has been provided by the Centre either directly or through State Government to NGO during the last 5 years under all the five schemes. In addition NGOs are also getting financial assistance through District Blindness Control Societies at District level under Schemes No. 1 to 3 out of a sum of Rs. 44,89,00,000 which has been released to Societies during the preceding 5 years.

(f) Some of the measures taken by the Government to control Blindness in the country are as under:-

(1) Strengthening of Opthalmic infrastructure.

(2) Training Opthalmic manpower.

(3) Establishment of District Blindness Control Societies.

(4) Expanding coverage to rural and tribal areas.

(5) Creating awareness about the eye care among the masses.

(6) Increasing financial outlay in the annual budget, and

(7) Strengthening the monitoring of Eye Care activities at the Central, State and District level.